MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now the House stands adjourned for lunch to re-assemble at 2.30 p.m.

14.28.hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till thirty minutes past fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha Re-assembled after Lunch at Thirty-Four Minutes Past Fourteen of the Clock

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need to provide more Central assistance to Madhya Pradesh for drought relief operations in the eastern district of State

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOHANLAL JHIKRAM (Mandla): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, most of the districts in the eastern region of Madhya Pradesh and particularly Mandla district is at present facing acute drought. In the beginning of this year, the estimated production of Kharif crop was good but at the time of ripening of the crop, it got dried up for want of rains and means of irrigation. Since it did not rain at the last moment, the Rabi crop too has been affected. In the situation of drought, neither the farmers were able to till the land nor sow the seeds. In this way, several districts including Mandla and Siwani had come under drought due to which thousands of residents of these areas are migrating to Jabalpur, Banda and Bhandra districts in search of work.

Therefore, I would request the Central Government to provide more assistance to Madhya Pradesh for undertaking drought relief operations in the drought hit districts of the State.

(ii) Need to finalise appropriate scheme for raising palm oil plantation on large scale in Little Andaman and other Islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands

[*English*]

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman-Nicobar Islands): The country is facing tremendous economic crisis for want of adequate foreign exchange reserves. The Government is however forced to import certain essential commodities like edible oil, by burdening the national exchequer. Time and again the Union Government spell out the need to increase oil seed production for meeting domestic edible oil requirement. Fortunately the Andaman and Nicobar Islands can contribute substantially by producing palm oil which can reduce the import bill. Though the programme for raising palm oil plantation in Andaman was taken up long before, only 1600 hectares of land is covered under palm oil plantation and producing the oil so far. The health and the growth of the plantation is better than Malaysia, the prime palm oil growing country.

The Little Andaman and the other Islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands having a tremendous potential of raising at least 20,000 hectares of palm oil plantation by which not only we will be saving substantial quantity import of palm oil from abroad but shall be able to generate a substantial employment potential in the Islands. The present 1600 hectare plantation is economically not viable.

I urge upon the Government to finalise the appropriate scheme for raising palm oil plantation in this area.

(iii) Need to check the fish epidemic in Kerala

PROF. K.V. THOMAS (Ernakulam): The fish epidemic in Kerala is going unabated. Even though the cause of the disease is